

**The Richmond Main Street Initiative, Inc.
Revitalizing Historic Downtown**

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

Friday, January 19, 2018 | 5:30 pm

Salute e Vita Ristorante

1900 Esplanade Drive, Richmond, CA 94804

CLOSED SESSION

Present: Billy Ward, Charlene Smith, Cindy Haden, Tami Steelman Gonzales, Virgil Weekes, Yvette Barr, Michael Martin, Xavier Abrams
Staff: Amanda Elliott, Alicia Gallo, Florene Wiley
Absent: Susan Bain, Gina Fromer, Grayling Harris, Zakhary Mallett

I. Opening of the Meeting

Because of the delayed arrival of the Board President & Vice President, the meeting was opened by Board Secretary Charlene Smith at 5:57pm.

II. Review and Approval of Agenda

The agenda was unanimously accepted and approved.

III. Board Recruitment

a. Potential New Members

- Amanda Elliott said she is looking to recruit at least 2 new additional board members
- She will have phone conversations and schedule interviews with these persons:
 1. Lucinda Bazile, affiliated with Lifelong & Brookside. She has participated in many events, and was on the RMSI 15th Anniversary Committee
 2. Charlie Patterson, owner of buildings at the 15th & Macdonald intersection where the businesses Rich City Rides and Your Way Pizza are located. He is very interested in the downtown revitalization effort.
 3. Robert Roberts, who works with County Supervisor John Gioia, formerly with East Bay Times, serves on a lot of community boards and knows a lot about grass-root efforts happening in Richmond.
- Abel Pineda was also mentioned, but was considered as having potential to serve in another capacity, not a board member
- Ernst Valery, Wendell Pierce and others considered to be movers and shakers with influence were discussed as honorary Board members, or advisory board members
 1. Ms. Membere Akilu, owner of Salute, was proposed by Yvette Barr as an advisory board member. This suggestion was very well received.

b. Meeting Dates/Times

Amanda Elliott spoke with Xavier Abrams about changing the regular Board meeting time to Fridays at 3:30-5pm. She cannot make that time on Fridays. Other Board members cannot make the Noon meeting time. After considerable discussion, consensus settled on meeting either the 1st or 2nd Thursday, from 3:30 to 5. Amanda will poll the Board via email for a final decision on the new meeting date and time.

Board Vice President Billy Ward took over helm of meeting at 6:13pm.

c. Board Retreat

- Generally held in the 1st Quarter in March; usually on regular Board meeting date
 1. At least 4 hours
 2. Strategic planning for the year – setting goals for fundraising and everything else.
 3. Location: Mechanics Bank Community Room has been offered by Xavier.

IV. Approval of Minutes – November 17, 2017

Tami Steelman Gonzales moved to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2017 Board Meeting.

Cindy Haden seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously accepted and approved.

V. Administrative Update

a. Financials - Profit & Loss Jan-Dec; Balance Sheet included in Board packets

- Total income vs expense we came out ahead; though we'd budgeted to bring in more
 1. Amanda will be meeting with RMSI Bookkeeper on 2018 budget
- Tami remarked about staff's smart budgeting and management. Cindy also remarked on Amanda Elliott's executive capability.
- Financials were accepted as presented.

b. Fundraising -

- RMSI has been solicited to participate in a couple of grant opportunities:
 1. Economic development grant projects:
 - a. Rubicon, Healthy Richmond, RMSI and the City are all looking to be partners; we will not take the lead in writing the grant, Jane of Rubicon suggested that LISC take the lead
 - b. Potentially a \$50,000 - \$150,000 grant though National Main Street for historic preservation African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Supervisor Gioia's office is working on a media project and may be able to collaborate
- Amanda also met with the new LISC exec director, Cynthia Wong; Amanda was the first person in Richmond to meet with her. Wong has only been in the position for 6 weeks. She is excited about revamping LISC Bay Area, and wants to know what RMSI needs are related to economic development; LISC was instrumental in launching neighborhood revitalization programs but RMSI lost funding from them 2 years ago and we're hoping to get that back. AE has applied to LISC for a \$30,000 grant.
 - a. Wong did explain that because of their transition they haven't determined who will receive grants; we're hoping for a response by end of 1st quarter
 - b. National LISC is interested in San Francisco
 - i. Wong wants to have more East Bay involvement
 - c. LISC has 3 staff openings, including Program Officer; they're looking for someone who has a "lot of hustle and humility."
- Amanda asked Flo Wiley to talk about the television project they are working on. She described a magazine format series about working, living and attending events downtown that would air on KCRT, Richmond's public access cable TV station
 - a. Michael Martin said he has some television production experience and would be glad to work with staff on this project
- Amanda also spoke about Citi Foundation grant she applied for that she found out about at a Google event; a grant of \$500,000 for two years for economic development projects.
- Amanda distributed the RMSI 2017 Biggest Donors/Grants list.
 - a. The \$10,000 Kaiser check is expected next week; Amanda spoke with them today
 - b. The CoBiz money from the City of Richmond for the buildout is also expected soon; Richmond Main Street will only receive 10% of the \$50K (\$5000); the rest goes toward the build out of the BART space.

- Yvette Barr recommended targeting builders as potential donors. Amanda remarked that relationships were important so if anyone has them, in any industry, please let her know. There was some discussion on involving Turner Construction.
- Amanda reported that she and Alicia Gallo are working on updating the RMSI donor data base. Their review of those records revealed how long it's been since some donors have contributed.
- The concept of digital sponsorship packages was discussed.

VI. Committee/Event Updates

a. Promotions/Fundraising

- AE hoping our new board members would be interested in serving on this committee
- Yvette and Michael agreed to work on the committee; Billy and Xavier are also willing to continue serving on this committee
 1. Need to work out a time and day
 - a. Early evening best for Billy
- Events start in June
- Starting Wednesday February 7, 2018 from 9:30 am to 10:30 am, there will be a Farmers Market on the Harbour Way lawn outside Kaiser. RMSI will promote it

b. Clean and Safe –

- Business Watch digital newsletter coming soon
- New beat officer, Officer Oliver
- Lt. Muhlenberg connected with the new BART Lieutenant and his representative is coming to our next meeting;
- We are getting our Big Belly trash cans; getting installed on Monday
- Mandy Swirsding from Crime Prevention is going to target the BART areas with handouts about personal safety and not being distracted

c. Economic Development -

- 1500 Macdonald BART Garage Space
 1. RMSI is partner with the Richmond Chamber and Renaissance on the CoBiz co-working space; it is funded by Chevron's eEquip (Richmond Community Foundation is the fiscal agent)
 2. Continuing to develop the plan for the project
 3. The CoBiz space is 5000--7000 sq. f.t of the building (depending on if they include the mezzanine)
 4. Challenge now is to find all of the funds to do the build out
 - a. Ernst Valery is working with RCF to get the funding;
 - i. San Francisco Foundation is not committed yet
 - b. \$750,000 to do the co-biz portion
 - c. Meeting next week with Chevron et al
 - i. Ernst is also talking with LISC about the about their Program Related Investment funds (PRI)
 - ii. Deadlines are moving from 1st Quarter to 2nd Quarter
 - iii. Renaissance Center submitted a grant and RMSI will get \$35,000 to do some business programs
 5. Cindy Haden asked whether this is likely to be another Chicken and Waffles.
 - a. Challenge is the size of the space; which AE tried to get them to consider a smaller space for the co-working project.
 6. Red Bay Coffee will be housed in a container; so less build out will be required
 7. Urban Remedy is the other vendor for the space; they manufacture in Richmond – healthy to go foods; just received a large investment.
- Relocating RMSI Office Space: Even though Mayor Butt is encouraging this move we have yet to receive a firm commitment from the City. We discussed that RMSI would not be charged rent.

The space would not work for us in its current configuration. Mayor Butt is proposing that we share the space with Visit Richmond. It is unclear who will pay the cost of reconfiguring the space.

- Downtown Merchants Association -- Next Steps:
 - a. Cover letter to go out with a simple questionnaire
 - b. 40-60 businesses within our footprint
 - c. We must position ourselves in an advisory role not a “do everything” role
 - d. When the Board meets next month, we hope to have an update
 - e. Tami wants to see the letter

VII. **Other Business/Good of the Order**

- 1) New RMSI website launched officially on December 28
 - Home page
 - Business directory
 - Offers page (coupons , deals, businesses only)
 - Events calendar
 - Website offers donation through Pay pal.

We also now have a Richmond Main Street App
- 2) Amanda invited to speak about urban main streets at Main Street California conference in Pleasanton in February.
- 3) Board Service Announcements
 - Gina Fromer has resigned from the RMSI board.
 - Zakhary’s service is uncertain because new work opportunities may take him away from the Bay Area.
 - Amanda recommended that the Executive Board reach out to Virgil Weekes about his board service
 - Michael recommended that someone have a personal conversation with him; some discussion that Board has had this conversation before while he wasn’t here; Billy Ward volunteered to contact Virgil Weekes and have a conversation with him.
 - Susan Bain is to be sent a letter regarding her service.
- 4) Inaugural, and hopefully to be annual, Santa Needs a New Sleigh fundraiser went well. Tips from beer sales and food truck went to RMSI. Event included 9 guest bartenders, music, Santa Claus and an ugly sweater contest. Bisa French was our secret weapon for selling raffle tickets. Made \$1200. Overspent on photo booth.
- 5) Downtown Holiday Festival, partnered with East Bay Center for the Performing Arts for the 6th year. Highlights included the health screenings by Kaiser, free books, a coloring book station, upstairs refreshments, and 2 performances of The Richmond Nutcracker, which played to standing room only houses.

VIII. **Meeting adjourned by Billy Ward at 7:16pm:**

Next meeting Date and Time to Be Determined
Richmond Main Street Office